

Week Ending Friday, April 21, 2006

The President's Radio Address

April 15, 2006

Good morning. Monday is tax day, and that means many of you are busy finishing up your tax returns. The good news is that this year Americans will once again keep more of their hard-earned dollars because of the tax cuts we passed in 2001 and 2003.

An important debate is taking place in Washington over whether to keep these tax cuts in place or to raise your taxes. For the sake of American workers and their families, and for our entrepreneurs, I believe Congress needs to make the tax relief permanent.

Our economy prospers when Americans like you make the decisions on how to spend, save, and invest your money. So the tax relief we passed cut taxes for everyone who pays income taxes. We cut taxes on families by lowering rates and by doubling the child credit. We also reduced the marriage penalty, because our Tax Code should encourage marriage, not penalize it. We cut taxes on small businesses, allowing them to expand and hire more workers. And we worked with Congress to phase out the death tax, because Government should not tax farmers or small-business owners twice—once when you make your money and the second time when you try to pass the fruits of your life's work on to your loved ones.

So far, the tax relief I signed has left \$880 billion with America's workers and small-business owners and families, and you have used that money to fuel an economic resurgence. Our economy has added jobs for 31 months in a row, creating more than 5.1 million new jobs for American workers. And the unemployment rate is now down to 4.7 percent, below the average rate for each of the past four decades. Real after-tax income per person has grown by more than 8 percent since I took office. And that means, on average, Americans have an income that is \$2,100

higher this year than it was at the beginning of 2001, after adjusting for inflation.

Not everyone agrees that we should let you keep more of your money. Some in Washington said that by cutting taxes, we were ruining our economy. On the day that the House and Senate were finalizing the 2003 tax cuts, one Democratic leader said these cuts would do nothing to create jobs. Since then, the facts have proven that critic wrong—5.1 million times over.

Tax relief has done exactly what it was designed to do: It has created jobs and growth for the American people. Yet some here in Washington are now proposing that we raise taxes, either by repealing the tax cuts or letting them expire. These are the same politicians who told us that letting you keep more of your own money would be irresponsible and reckless and shameful. They were wrong then, and they are wrong now. To keep our economy creating jobs and opportunity, Congress needs to make the tax relief permanent.

There's more to do to maintain America's economic strength. We're working to address rising energy prices and health care costs, which puts pressure on family budgets and the bottom lines of our small businesses. I have proposed practical reforms that would make health care more available and affordable, and I put forward an energy initiative that would make our dependence on Middle Eastern oil a thing of the past. I urge Congress to act on these important priorities, so we can keep America the economic leader of the world and allow more families and small businesses to realize the American Dream.

America's economy is strong and benefiting all Americans. By keeping taxes low and adopting sound policies that help our workers to compete and our businesses to grow and expand, we will keep the economy moving forward and extend prosperity and hope in our country.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:36 a.m. on April 13 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 15. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 14 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following a Meeting on Taxes and the National Economy in Sterling, Virginia
April 17, 2006

I want to thank Carlos and Owen and Adam for inviting us to their business. I also want to thank the other folks that we had a discussion with for coming over. We've got folks that have benefited from the tax relief, both as a small-business owner and/or an employee—except for Mike; he's a firefighter. And it's been a good discussion.

Here's what I come away with: One, the tax relief helped small businesses a lot. And since small businesses create two-thirds of the new jobs of America, it is no wonder that our job base is expanding. When you help the small-business owner with tax relief, you're helping to create employment. And that's what we're seeing across the country. We've added 5.1 million new jobs in the last 2½ years. A lot of it has to do with the fact that our small-business owners are confident, and they're investing, and they're expanding the job base.

I talked to Shannon Bennett. She's a single mom with one young son who saved about \$1,200 or \$1,300 on her taxes this past year. And it's important for her family that she has got some additional money. Owen—I mean, Mike has got three children. He's a firefighter. The tax relief helped. In other words, tax relief helped the small-business owner; it's helped our families.

And what's interesting is, the tax relief is set to expire. Actually, there's some Democrats in Congress who would like to raise taxes now. And if that happens, it will be a tax increase no one expects, no one wants. It will be like getting hit by one of these granite rocks.

And so I strongly urge the United States Congress to understand the positive effects

of the tax relief and to keep the taxes low—keep the taxes low on the working people, keep the taxes low on these small-business owners, so that we continue—so that we can continue to be the—an economy that leads the world.

And I want to thank you for your time, letting us come by. It's tax day, and it's a day to recommit ourselves to low taxes. It's a day that understands that when these people filing out their forms and writing checks to the Government, that it's the people's money that's coming to Washington, DC. And we intend to let people keep more of their own money, for the sake of the economy and for the sake of our families.

So thanks for letting us come by. Appreciate your hard work. I love the fact that you're living the American Dream.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:12 a.m. at Europa Stone Distributors, Inc. In his remarks, he referred to Carlos Varela, co-owner and president, Owen Werthmann, co-owner and vice president, and Adam Mahmud, co-owner and vice president, Europa Stone Distributors, Inc.; and Miguel "Mike" Obleas, firefighter, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department.

Memorandum on Designation of Officers of the Social Security Administration

April 17, 2006

Memorandum for the Commissioner of Social Security

Subject: Designation of Officers of the Social Security Administration

By the authority vested in me as President under the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, I hereby order that:

Section 1. Order of Succession.

During any period when both the Commissioner of Social Security (Commissioner) and the Deputy Commissioner of Social Security (Deputy Commissioner) have died, resigned, or otherwise become unable to perform the functions and duties of the office of Commissioner, the following officers of the Social Security Administration, in the